

workshop titled “Makhtutat and nosakh-e khatti. Research trends and current developments in dealing with manuscripts. A comparative approach: Iran, Iraq and Germany”. The aim was to bring together professionals working in the field of manuscript research not only in Germany, but also in Iran and Iraq. Accordingly, the conference was mainly held in Arabic with the occasional help of interpreters from the staff and members assisting one another in the ensuing discussions. The presentations themselves covered the situation of various collections of Oriental manuscripts and dealt with a number of cataloguing and digitising projects. The importance assigned to manuscripts in a society and the access to relevant collections are often influenced by political circumstances and traditional contexts, whether in the West or in the East. While after the Islamic Revolution 1979 in Iran more funds were made available for the field of palaeography, scholars and librarians from Iraq had to wait until after the latest war before getting some support for their manuscript collections.

Allowing access to the originals and making collections visible in the first place was seen by the workshop participants as an important task for the near future. The rich heritage of Islamic culture and literature, as it is documented in these texts, cannot remain hidden. At the same time, we should not underestimate the accessibility and mobility of knowledge during the pre-modern era in the Near and Middle East. The oftentimes peculiar histories of certain collections or the insights into Oriental book culture, as presented at the workshop, served as an inspiration for our dealing with historical manuscripts – and the transfer of knowledge in general – in the future. But how should this much-wanted openness and accessibility be achieved? Most collections today appear to be only in the initial stages of opening up, the individual perspectives naturally being far away from ideas like worldwide interoperability of data as e.g. discussed in the field of Digital Humanities. Nevertheless, even without having such a grand vision for this workshop, the goal to exchange approaches and methods led into the same direction and organizations dealing with Oriental manuscripts on a global scale like TIMA and COMSt did not go unmentioned.

The contact making and socialising, as exemplified at the Marburg workshop, will hopefully help spreading the knowledge of scientific ways and methods in manuscript studies, but also stimulate a discussion for further development, especially with a growing portion of Oriental scholars contributing their own perspectives. Connecting the different specialists on both a professional and personal level was one of the outstanding traits of the “Makhtutat and nosakh-e

khatti” workshop. The initiators and organizers, Leslie Tramontini, Emad Sheikh al-Hokamaee and Christoph Werner – and not least the student assistants – have rightfully earned the sincere appreciation and gratitude of all participants for a thought-provoking and occasionally quite vivid event with a very friendly atmosphere.

Cornelius Berthold, Leipzig University

Historical Documents, Digital Approaches. A Workshop on the Mark-up, Analysis and Representation of Mediaeval Texts

The focus of the three-day Ghent-based workshop/seminar *Historical Documents, Digital Approaches* (5-7 September 2013) was on the application of digital methods to mediaeval documents and texts. The event, organized at the initiative of Prof. Els De Paermentier (Ghent University) with funding of the Ghent Doctoral Schools of Arts, Humanities and Law, was hosted by the Ghent Department of History. The broadly based workshop – supported by the Henri Pirenne Institute for Medieval Studies (<http://www.pirenne.ugent.be>), the Flemish Medieval Studies Workgroup (<http://www.vlaamsewerkgroepmedievalistiek.org>), the Ghent Centre for Digital Humanities (<http://www.gcdh.ugent.be>) and the Ghent Center for Slavic and East European Studies – was intended to reach an audience of digital novices as well as more advanced ‘digital humanists’ by wedding the opposite extremes of the spectrum, viz. practice at its most basic and theory at its most general level.

The seminar featured a series of morning lectures, loosely organized around three themes, viz. 1) Issues of mark-up, on the challenges of translating material documents into digital text; 2) Computational data analysis, on novel forms of classifying, comparing and analysing datasets; and 3) Digital representation, on editing and presenting digital text, that is, on different kinds of reader engagement enabled by digitized resources and on the nature and claims of digital text objects.

The opening lecture on Thursday (5 September) by co-organizer Lara Sels (KULeuven/Ghent University) on the role of the editor in the digital age, exemplified by a report on the Vidin Miscellany Digital Edition Project, was followed by a lively discussion of the challenges of digital text editing. The following two papers dealt with issues of markup: Laura Gili (École des chartes, Paris) discussed the markup and formatting of an XML/TEI index of twelfth-century charters, with particular attention to adjusting the presentation in accord with the different expectations of audiences from the French and Italian scholarly traditions, while Bert Van Raemdonck (Ghent University) presented

an accessible and instructive introduction to TEI – with “The I in TEI” as a catchphrase.

The keynote speaker on Friday (6 September) was DH veteran Edward Vanhoutte (KANTL, Royal Academy of Dutch Language and Literature), who answered the question of his title – “Which Digital Humanities?” – with a detailed history of the field, from the early development of computational linguistics through wartime machine translation and cryptanalysis to the numerous and variegated endeavours today gathered under the umbrella term Digital Humanities. In the following presentation David J. Birnbaum (University of Pittsburgh) picked up the thread of the discussion of the first day with his exposition on “Perspectives on the digital edition and publication of medieval manuscripts”, with particular attention to integrating the documentary editing and publication of manuscripts with the critical editing and publication of texts. The two ensuing papers illustrated the application of specific computational linguistic methods to the study of mediaeval textual material: Folger Karsdorp (Meertens Instituut Amsterdam) discussed and evaluated the Latent Dirichlet Allocation and other computational models for automating the identification and analysis of motifs in modern and medieval folktales, while Mike Kestemont (University of Antwerp) employed stylometric authorship attribution to argue that some works traditionally attributed to Hildegard of Bingen are more likely to have been written by her secretary, Guibert of Gembloux.

The last morning session on Saturday (7 September) began with a thought-provoking keynote lecture by Peter Stokes (King’s College London) on the opportunities and limitations of online representations of material texts. The next speaker, Leah Tether (Anglia Ruskin University), argued that mediaeval reading culture itself can offer direction to our attempts to represent mediaeval texts and to engage readers in a digital environment because it shares certain features (viz. hypertext, non-sequential and interactive reading) with present-day digital reading culture. Finally, Caroline Macé (KULeuven) returned to methodological questions of text edition and thus closed the circle; her presentation was a warning against the pitfalls of purely document-based approaches and a passionate argument for the importance of textual criticism and for the possibility of formalizing and computerizing some parts of that process.

The heart of the event, however, was the practical part of the Ghent workshop, which consisted of three afternoon sessions in the ICT-classroom with Prof. David J. Birnbaum from the University of Pittsburgh as the principal instructor. An introduction to XML and the general TEI infrastructure (day 1) lead

up to two hands-on sessions about TEI-based textual encoding for mediaeval studies, with day 2 devoted to textual transcription and day 3 to the formal analytic description of mediaeval manuscripts. In these sessions, attended by a motivated group of some fifteen PhD-students and young scholars, participants were invited to practice in the <Oxygen/> XML editor with their own materials or with the documents made available on the workshop webpage – <http://ghent.obdurodon.org> – by Els De Paermentier (Latin charters), Tjamke Snijders (Latin Saints’ Lives), and David J. Birnbaum (Slavonic Saints’ Lives). By the end of the workshop participants had acquired a basic understanding of how to transcribe manuscripts for subsequent analysis and publication and how to prepare TEI-conformant descriptions of those manuscripts using <Oxygen/>.

Lara Sels, KULeuven

VIII Colloque International de Paléographie Grecque

The Institut für Griechische und Lateinische Philologie in Hamburg, together with the Comité International de Paléographie Grecque organized and hosted the 8th *International Colloquium of Greek Palaeography* from September 22 to 28, 2013.

Despite the fact that Greek palaeography, as a field of research, is more than 300 years old, starting from the monumental opus *Palaeographia Graeca* by Bernard de Montfaucon in 1708, and about half a century as a proper domain (supporting or autonomous), it is only during the last few decades that relevant international conferences are organized. The first such was held in Paris in 1974, while the second in 1983, and ever since a conference takes place approximately every five years, the proceedings of which make important reference volumes, not counting those of the 4th in Oxford, which were never published.

This year’s colloquium was specifically titled “Greek manuscripts: Yesterday, today and tomorrow” (Griechische Handschriften: gestern, heute und morgen), emphasizing on the antithesis between ‘traditional’ research approaches and the advances that have taken place during the last years in the methodological tools of Greek palaeography, offering a glimpse at the future. This specific concern was obvious in the conference from the names of the panels that hosted approximately seventy papers. There were sessions dedicated to “classic” issues of the history of libraries (*Griechische Bibliotheken und Sammlungen*) and history of the script (*Die Geschichte der Schrift*), but, following the new tendency to separate codicology from palaeography, two sessions were dedicated to issues concerning the ‘construction’ of manuscripts,